

Job Description: Director of Planning Center for Planning Excellence

If you are a driven leader who excels in a fast-paced environment and wants to shape and enhance the quality of life and community design of Louisiana's diverse communities, please read on.

The Center for Planning Excellence (CPEX) is a unique non-profit planning organization that provides planning and policy services, drives cross-agency and collaborative statewide planning initiatives and guides urban, rural, and regional planning implementation in Louisiana. We provide best-practice planning models, innovative policy ideas, and technical assistance to individual communities that wish to create and enact a broad spectrum of plans, including master plans and those dealing with transportation and infrastructure needs, environmental issues, and healthy community design. CPEX brings together community members and leaders from across the state and provides guidance as they work toward a shared vision for future smart growth and sustainable development. CPEX continues to be on the cutting edge of climate, resilience, and healthy community design in Louisiana.

CPEX is seeking a collaborative leader who is an experienced and innovative planner to lead the organization's community planning initiatives – leading the planning team, developing client and staff relationships, business development, and working on interesting and challenging projects. The successful applicant must have experience in all aspects of community planning, project and team management, have the desire to build relationships with diverse community representatives, and be flexible and self-motivated to provide high-quality planning services to diverse communities throughout Louisiana.

DESCRIPTION OF DUTIES

The Director of Planning reports to the CEO and is part of CPEX's executive management team. They are responsible for setting policy direction, continually developing the organization's statewide planning relationships, and securing and executing planning projects. The position is high-profile, manages and cultivates staff, and works with design and planning professionals, public officials, private sector supporters, state agency representatives, and community members to promote land use planning throughout the state of Louisiana. The position includes the following development, managerial, and planning functions:

Development

- Develop partnerships to identify and secure funding opportunities to support community planning initiatives.
- Develop and maintain professional working relationships with key state agency representatives, organizations, and elected and appointed officials, on behalf of CPEX.
- Build relationships and promote CPEX and its services to state and local governments, and to other community organizations across the state.

- Oversee and enhance project management processes to successfully conduct community and regional plans through to adoption.
- Assist the CEO/President with development and oversight of policy and implementation strategies and securing work to meet budget requirements.
- Lead marketing of planning services and develop scopes and budgets for potential projects.

Managerial Functions

- Provide direction and planning guidance to planning staff.
- Continually work to improve staff capacity and planning knowledge.
- Provide direction to staff on CPEX outreach and education activities.
- Provide direction to staff on project development, marketing, organizational work plans and board reports.
- Develop partnerships with other firms and secure sub-consultants.
- Ensure high quality standards are met and oversee document development/production/delivery on all projects.
- Coordinate outreach and public relation activities for planning projects.
- Oversee grant reporting for planning projects as necessary.
- Make budgeting and contracting decisions.

Planning Functions

- Build relationships with community leaders throughout Louisiana.
- Coordinate stakeholder committees.
- Organize and lead equitable and inclusive public meetings and committee meetings.
- Advise communities on planning issues, needs, and solutions.
- Coordinate clients, the public, and consultant teams.

Other CPEX Functions

- Work with the management team to set organizational direction through our strategic planning process.
- Execute the annual strategic plan for Statewide Planning.
- Assist in overall CPEX development, administrative functions, and CPEX outreach when requested by the CEO/President.

DESIRED KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITY

- Excellent verbal and written communication skills
- Visionary
- Interpersonal savvy
- Entrepreneurial drive; strong business development skills
- Flexible, and able to think on your feet in a large variety of situations
- Able to connect with diverse groups of people, establish trust and common ground

- Knowledge of the principles, practices, regulations, and laws of land use, planning, development, subdivisions, and zoning Louisiana-specific knowledge, or the ability to quickly acquire it, is preferred.
- Familiar with principles of land management, environmental issues, economics, technical research, and statistics.
- Desire to continually learn evolving areas of planning and best practices.
- Ability to write clear, compelling, and customized plans.
- Management of staff.
- Budgeting and project management.
- Ability to be a team player and team leader.
- Ability to be flexible in customizing planning approaches to meet a variety of community issues and needs.

This is a full-time, salaried position with benefits in a flexible, hybrid remote/in-office work environment. The successful candidate will be expected to regularly attend CPEX events and meetings in Baton Rouge, New Orleans, and around Louisiana, including some evening and weekend events when necessary. Applicants should have a minimum of 8 years of experience with a significant amount of time managing staff and planning projects. AICP certification is a plus. Salary anticipated to start at \$100,000 and will be commensurate with the successful candidate's level of experience.

Applicants must submit a resume, cover letter, 2-3 references, and portfolio if desired, to Heather Finke at hfinke@cpep.org until the position is filled. Qualified candidates will be invited for virtual or in-person interviews on an ongoing basis. References will only be contacted after coordination with the candidate. We are excited to add a new member to our team to bring fresh knowledge and energy to our work helping Louisiana communities shape Louisiana's future.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at CPEX

CPEX is committed to advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion and we aspire to do so intentionally, in every aspect of our work. We recognize that sustainable prosperity and community resilience cannot be realized in the absence of equity and inclusion for all Louisiana residents, and we strive to lift all voices in our efforts to ensure that all Louisianans are included in the decisions that impact their communities, region, and state. CPEX is committed to integrating DEI into the fabric of our organization and our work, from our internal culture to how we partner with communities, to how we use our resources, and we are continually seeking ways to expand our impact and improve our performance on these measures. A successful candidate will be equally committed to these goals and values.